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eral men might be within reach. Mesquite was picked day after day until the bushes held no more, even after they thought they had enough, because mesquite was their staple. 222

On returning home late in the afternoon, the beans were sorted. The dry beans were put on the roof of the house to dry more thoroughly. These were piled, load upon load, until the last load had remained for three or four days. Should it be cloudy or wet, they were taken off the roof and covered. The thoroughly dry beans were then stowed away in huge basket granaries. An average family would have one large granary filled, with a surplus stored in the house in large pots. 251

The green beans sorted out at the end of each day's gleaning were prepared at once. Mesquite beans resemble our string beans, but while the pods can be readily pulverized in a mortar, it is practically impossible to crack the seeds. These greener pods were pounded up and, without removing the hard seeds, were mixed in water for a drink. Or this was boiled and used as a liquor to mix with other ground seeds. 272

After the storage receptacles were filled, the beans that were discarded as not good enough for storing were ground to be made into cakes. The ground bean meal was sifted in a Pima tray-basket by shaking it over the edge onto a cloth. An elliptical hole (eighteen inches long, twelve wide, by ten deep) was dug in the ground and sprinkled with water until its surface was firm. The sifted flour was poured into this, sprinkled, another layer of flour added, sprinkled, and so on. Finally it was sprinkled and covered with dirt. The following morning they would remove the hard cake of mesquite flour. A woman kept busily at this until twenty or more were prepared. These cakes (hapa'ndj) were intended for use on damp days when the stored pods could not be ground because they were damp. (Mesquite beans absorb the slightest moisture in the atmosphere.) A bit of the cake would be broken off, soaked in water to be used as a drink, or boiled and mixed with other ground seeds. 252

Mesquite was ordinarily used only after pounding in a mortar and grinding on a metate. This was a daily task of the women. The ground meal formed the basis of most food preparations.

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252 Occasionally a quantity was ground and stored in a pot to be eaten dry by the pinch, with a swallow of water. Sometimes the dry pods were boiled without grinding, the liquor to be added to other ground seeds. Mesquite juice was not fermented.

Screw beans, which when picked are bitter or sour, were rotted in a pit for ten days or more, until they became soft and sweet. The pit was lined above and below the beans with green arrow-weeds and the whole covered with dirt. Such pits were made near the dwelling.

222 252 A number of varieties of wild seeds were gathered, all in the same fashion by stripping the seeds from the plants with the fingers into a basket held beneath. Seed beaters were not used. None of these served for more than to give variety to the meals. The plant used more than others was ĭkse'vâ, which furnished tiny red seeds.[2] The seeds were so tiny that a large quantity was needed. They were pounded in a mortar and the chaff blown out [272] as they were shaken in a shallow basket. They were next parched and ground on a metate. Their use was principally for a drink. It was said to feel cool, so that men hunting for jackrabbits liked to drink this. Another low bush, ᵃ'tŏ'n, had tiny black seeds gathered in December. These were also prepared by pounding, parching, and grinding, and were eaten dry by pinches or mixed with water for a drink. Two other seeds were prepared differently. These were âvâa'c, a low bush,[3] and kâvâsω, a common bush three to four feet tall, both gathered in December. The seeds of the latter were tiny and black. These were pounded in the mortar, but not parched. A fire was built in a hole, the coals raked out, and the ashes soaked or damp dirt placed over them. The seeds put in the hole were covered with green leaves, followed by a layer of coals. The whole was plastered over with soaked hot ashes to retain the heat. The following morning they were ground on the metate, then mixed with water to a stiff dough [241] which was eaten raw. Another wild seed plant, ĭkca'mac, differed

[2] This was a low bush, two feet high, with sparse leaves standing out from the stem two inches apart.

[3] Possibly from ᵃvᵃa'k, "I am walking," referring to stripping the bushes as one walked along.

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from these in that it was sometimes cultivated. This was a weed [241] 222 252 resembling tall Bermuda grass. The seeds were pounded in a mortar to remove the hulls, sprinkled with water, and ground on a metate. The meal was mixed into a dough with a little salt. It was baked in the ashes, which were later washed off, and eaten with mesquite bean soup and the like. The seeds of ʌgwa'vâ, probably pigweed, were also eaten.

While seeds appear to have been gathered in the late fall, i.e., December, berries were gathered in May and June. A bush about four feet tall, axtŏ'tâxa'n, bore little sweet red berries. The berries were washed and thrown into hot water to boil. They [272] cooked quickly. This was strained through a cloth, the berries mashed, and replaced in the liquor. This was used as a drink. Sometimes ground wheat (not mesquite) was cooked in this for a mush. If they wished to store the boiled berries, they were spread [251] on a cloth in the shade, and stored in pots when thoroughly dry. Similar berries, axtŏ'tâvi' (so called because they were bitter?), were prepared in exactly the same way. Mistletoe (kamu'c) grew plentifully on the mesquite bushes. Sprigs of this were gathered, the berries stripped off and boiled to furnish a juice which was sticky but tasteless. This was used as a liquor for wheat mush. Somewhat later than these, in June, the little blueblack berries of Crucifixion thorn (? uwe') were gathered. They were mashed in a basket to make a foamy liquid which was eaten without cooking. Sometimes the berries were dried and stored: when wanted they were soaked in hot water.

A sifter (caxara'c) was used with the axtŏ't berries. This was [115] elliptical, like those of the Pima,[4] shallow, and about a foot long. Thin willow twigs were laid transversely and longitudinally, and bound to the willow hoop.

When a young girl had gathered axtŏ't and uwe' berries for the first time, it was customary for some older woman to mash and rub them on the girl's arms so she would be industrious.

The nuts of the abundant ironwood tree were ground and [171] leached after the fashion in which California Indians prepare acorns. By the end of the season, October, they are said to lie

[4] Russell, *Pima Indians*, p. 146.

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252 sticks laid side by side or on a cloth, and when dry was rolled in a bundle. This was called mĭl,pŏk, "spread," or hama'ṇk, "pruned; trimmed off." The head proper was eaten without mashing. The prepared mescal could be soaked in water and [272] chewed on, or the foamy sweet liquor drunk.

Tule pollen and roots formed a most minor food. A child play- [222] ing or a hunter would pause to strip the pollen off in his hand and swallow it. Women gathered it occasionally. They broke the heads off gently so as not to shake out the light pollen, holding a basket beneath to catch the heads. Using a large pot placed on its side for protection against the wind, the heads were shaken out inside it. The pollen was poured into the basket, which was rocked from side to side to bring the chaff to the top. A sweet mush was made of this pollen mixed with a little ground wheat. [251] When they wanted to preserve it, a hole was made, sprinkled and patted, the pollen poured in layer by layer, each being sprinkled, and the whole covered with dirt. A little fire on top baked it cake-like by the next day. Sometimes the large roots of older tules were chewed. They might also be dried and ground to make a gruel. Tules are at'ăpi'l.

[137] Sunflowers grew wild, but were not a foodstuff.

Travellers sometimes boiled the water-filled pulp of the barrel cactus (mĭltŏ't) with a little alkali.

The time when the giant cactus (sahuaro) fruit ripened, the 222 middle of June, was eagerly welcomed, not because the fruit formed any considerable portion of the dietary but as an occa- [527] sion for celebration and debauch. The plant was not common in Maricopa territory proper, growing rather on the lower hill slopes north of the Salt River. Hence the desire to collect the fruit was spiced with the dangers incident to treading so close to Yavapai country. The Yavapai themselves descended from their mountains to gather it in the same area.

The fruit is ripe when it is red at the bud end. The few long spines it bears are at this end: these were readily plucked off [419] with the fingers. The fruit was gathered with a long hook: a pole (presumably a rib of this tree-like cactus) crossed obliquely near one end by a short stick to provide both a hook and crotch to

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work with.[6] Fruits that were fully ripe and open were allowed to remain until on drying the flesh dropped to the ground, when it might be gathered. Those that had not reached this stage were pulled from the plant. These were torn in two and eaten as they were. The fully ripened fruit sours in the summer heat. These were in consequence split and the flesh put into pots. As soon as they reached the river these were placed over a little fire so that the potful was brought nearly to the boiling point. The fruit would then keep; otherwise it soured in half a day. The unripe fruit, on the other hand, if carried about in a pot in this fashion, would simply become a watery mass. The fruit might be stored in this manner until winter, when it was dissolved in water for a drink, said to be very sweet, or strained through a cloth and boiled to syrup.

By preference however, the sahuaro harvest formed the basis of a jollification. If this was their intention, they forbade anyone gathering it until it ripened on the plant: nevertheless some did steal off to get it. They would boil it as above and set as many as one hundred large pots away in the meeting house to ferment. The boiling was done under a shade conveniently near. It was stored in the house while still hot, a little fire being maintained there to keep it warm. A man who was adept watched it for the two days required to ferment. When one potful fermented, he poured some of the contents into others, so that all would finish fermenting at the same time. Each family owned one to three of these potfuls, which they were called to carry home when ready.

Friends in other tribes were invited to dance at this time, saying that "Our store house is ripe." The guests came in a group slowly, camping at some distance from the village. The messenger who bore the invitations now walked out to the camp where he named those invited by each Maricopa, pointing out where he lived.

The method of handing out the drinks was stereotyped. The men invited would bring three or four friends. The host would send his wife into the house to bring out a cupful (a small pot or

[6] Curtis' description (II, 82) of a pole provided with a wooden blade was specifically denied by my informants.